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THE THANOS IMPERATIVE

A SERIES OF INTERSTELLAR WARS HAVE DAMAGED THE FABRIC OF TIME AND SPACE. AS A RESULT, OUR UNIVERSE HAS BEEN TORN OPEN.

RICHARD RIDER, A.K.A. NOVA -- THE LAST OF AN EMPOWERED FORCE OF CHAMPIONS WHO ONCE POLICED THE GALAXY -- DISCOVERED A LARGE TEAR IN SPACE-TIME KNOWN AS THE FAULT. THE GATEWAY TO A HIDEOUS REFLECTION OF OUR UNIVERSE DUBBED "THE CANCERVERSE."

LORD MAR-VELL -- THE CANCERVERSE'S VERSION OF CAPTAIN MAR-VELL -- COMMANDS THIS TWISTED UNIVERSE WHERE DEATH ITSELF HAS BEEN EXTERMINATED. LOOKING FOR NEW WORLDS TO CONQUER, HE HAS INVADDED OUR UNIVERSE THROUGH THE FAULT.

NOVA, IN AN ATTEMPT TO RESCUE **NAMORITA** AND OTHER CAPTURED HEROES, LED A SMALL AMBUSH TEAM AGAINST MAR-VELL BUT WERE SNEAK-ATTACKED BY MAR-VELL AND ENGULFED IN A MASSIVE EXPLOSION.

ON THE FRONTLINE OF THE FAULT, THE COLOSSAL COSMIC ABSTRACTS AND COMBINED GALACTIC FORCES OF OUR UNIVERSE BATTLED THE CANCERVERSE'S DEMENTED FORCES. LED BY THEIR UNIVERSE'S DEVOURER OF WORLDS, THE GREAT AND HORRIBLE GALACTUS ENGINE!

MEANWHILE **STAR-LORD** AND THE **GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY** ATTEMPTED TO DEPLOY THE NEWLY RESURRECTED **THANOS** IN AN ATTEMPT TO RESTORE DEATH TO THE CANCERVERSE AND BREAK MAR-VELL'S STRANGLEHOLD. **DRAK THE DESTROYER** DISINTEGRATED THE MAD TITAN, BUT THANOS RETURNED TO LIFE YET AGAIN -- REJECTED BY HIS ONE-TIME LOVE, **DEATH** HERSELF. DISTRAUGHT, THANOS KILLED DRAK, AN AVATAR OF LIFE, CAUSING MAR-VELL TO BECOME AWARE OF THANOS' PRESENCE IN THE CANCERVERSE.

MAR-VELL'S **REVENGERS**, TWISTED VERSIONS OF EARTH'S MIGHTIEST HEROES, DESCENDED UPON THE GUARDIANS -- DETERMINED TO CAPTURE THANOS NO MATTER THE COST! BATTLING THE REVENGERS WITH THE HELP OF THE **SCARLET WITCH**, THE GUARDIANS AND THANOS ESCAPED TO THE SITE OF THE NECROPSY. BEFORE THANOS COULD REVERSE THE EFFECTS OF THE NECROPSY AND BRING DEATH BACK TO THE CANCERVERSE, LORD MAR-VELL AND THE REVENGERS ONCE AGAIN FOLLOWED AND ATTACKED THE GUARDIANS.

MAR-VELL AND THANOS FACED EACH OTHER HEAD-ON UNTIL THANOS STOPPED THE FIGHT BY DECLARING LOYALTY TO LORD MAR-VELL IN EXCHANGE FOR HIS OWN DEATH!

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THE SITE OF THE NECROPSY RITE,
THE CANCERVERSE.

THE ANTI-
DIMENSIONS
CONTAINING YOUR
ELDER GODS OVERLAP
AND MERGE HERE, LORD
MAR-VELL... IT IS THE
PERFECT PLACE
FOR MY
SUBMISSION.

YOU WANT
ME DEAD SO THAT
DEATH MAY DIE, I
NO LONGER WISH
TO LIVE...

I THINK
WE CAN COME
TO SOME
ARRANGEMENT.

THANOS, YOU
SONUVA--

STAR-LORD

NUTS!

ROCKET
RACCOON

COSMO

BOZHE
MO!!

MANTIS

GAMORA



FTAGHN!
I AM DELIGHTED
YOU'RE TAKING IT
SO WELL!

LET ME
EMBRACE YOU
AND YOUR
TRAVELLING
COMPANIONS.



GAAH!

NO!
NO!

FLARK
ON A
STICK!

I CAN'T
PROMISE THIS
WILL BE PAINLESS,
AVATAR OF DEATH,
BUT I WON'T
KEEP YOU
LONG.

I AM GRATEFUL
FOR YOUR
COOPERATION. YOU
ARE THE SINGULAR
ANOMALY, THE ONE LAST
WHISPER OF DEATH IN
THE FACE OF LIFE'S
INVINCIBILITY.

THE HUNT
FOR YOU HAS
BEEN QUITE
EXHAUSTING.

AND MY
MASTERS HAVE
BEEN LONGING
TO MEET
YOU.

THHRRKKKK



BEHOLD,
MANY-ANGLED
ONES! I HAVE
BROUGHT YOU
THE AVATAR
OF DEATH!

YES! YES!
GIFT ME THE
CEREMONIAL
DEVICE...





OUR UNIVERSE
AT THE MOUTH OF THE FAULT.

"WE HAVE
REACHED A
PIVOTAL
JUNCTURE."

"IF THE
DEVOURER OF
WORLDS CANNOT
VANQUISH THE OBSCURE
GALACTUS ENGINE,
WE WILL QUICKLY
FOLLOW OUR
MASTER TO HIS
DOOM."

"I DELIGHT
THAT DEBATE!
TONE, SURGER."

"NO TONE,
IT IS
BEYOND ME!
IT IS A LOGICAL
ASSESSMENT
OF OUR
SITUATION."

"THEN DO
NOT VOICE IT!
KEEP THE COM-LINKS
CLEAR FOR
STRATEGIC
RELAY!"

KARNAK?

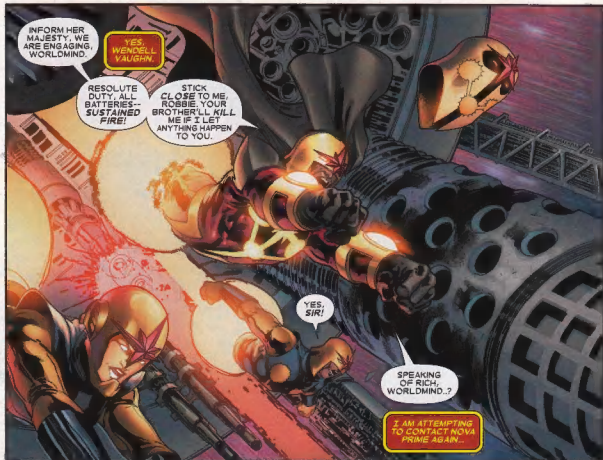
"I SUGGEST
WE BRING THE
REMAINDER OF THE
SHI'AR AND KREE
FLEETS AROUND IN
SUPPORT OF
GALACTUS
MAJESTOR."

"KING
BLASTAAR'S
SQUADRON
MUST CLOSE
IN TO ACT AS
REARGUARD."

"THIS
IS QUEEN
MEDUSA."

"BLASTAAR
HAS ALREADY
FILED THE LINE
WE'RE ON OUR OWN.
SPARTOI AND NARTHAN
BATTLEGROUPS
WILL COVER
OUR BACKS."

"I HAVE
INSTRUCTED
THE NOVA CORPS
TO SUPPORT
GALACTUS
DIRECTLY."



INFORM HER MAJESTY, WE ARE ENGAGING, WORLDMIND.

YES, WENDELL VAUGHN.

RESOLUTE DUTY, ALL BATTERIES-- SUSTAINED FIRE!

STICK CLOSE TO ME, ROBBIE. YOUR BROTHER'LL KILL ME IF I LET ANYTHING HAPPEN TO YOU.

YES, SIR!

SPEAKING OF RICH, WORLDMIND..?

I AM ATTEMPTING TO CONTACT NOVA PRIME AGAIN...



KNOWHERE.

WE'VE HEARD NOTHING FROM RICH EITHER, WORLDMIND.

IT'S BEEN ALMOST TWENTY MINUTES SINCE MAJOR VICTORY AND I SENT HIM INTO THE CANCERVERSE TO FIND STAR-LORD.

I SUPPOSE WE COULD PRESS THE ABORT AND FORCE HIS PASSPORT BRACELET TO BOUNCE HIM BACK TO THE CONTINUUM CORTEX.

I DO NOT BELIEVE NOVA PRIME WOULD THANK YOU FOR THAT, MAJOR.

I CONFESS, I AM TROUBLED BY THIS COMMUNICATION LAG, NAMORITA PRENTISS...



...MY BOND WITH NOVA PRIME HAS ALWAYS BEEN CLOSE.

SO HAS MINE, WORLDMIND.

SOMETHING'S HAPPENING.

HELL, SOMETHING'S REALLY HAPPENING.

THE CORTEX'S INTERSTITIAL SENSORS HAVE SUDDENLY SPIKED...



"...SOME KIND OF ENERGY SOURCE JUST WENT OFF THE SCALE IN THE CANCERVERSE!"

NN
AA
RR
GH!
H!

YOU SEE? EVEN DEATH MAY DIE! IT IS SUPREMELY LIBERATING!



DEATH... HAS ALWAYS BEEN... THE MOST INTERESTING PART OF A LIFETIME...

HURRY... UP!



SURE AM GLAD YOU DIDN'T MAKE A PLAN, PETE, BECAUSE--DUDE! THIS WOULD BE IT GOING BADLY WRONG, WOULDN'T IT?

YEAH, LAUGH IT UP, ROCKY!

COSMO BELIEVE THE RACCOON'S REMARK WAS BENIGN MORE MORDANT THAN ACTUALLY FUNNY.

AT LEAST NOVA WAS ABLE TO FREE US.

WHAT? RIDER'S NOT WITH US, MANTIS! WE'RE STILL TRAPPED! ARE YOU DEMENTED?



OH! YOU'RE RIGHT. HE'S NOT HERE.

IT MUST HAVE BEEN A PREMONITION. I DO GET THAT A LOT...





STOP HIM!
REVENGERS,
IMMOBILIZE
HIM!

YEAH,
GO AHEAD,
TRY.

WORLDMIND?
WORLDMIND?

IRON MAN
RENDERS HIMSELF
IMMOBILIZED
BY THE ENEMY'S
ATTACKS

IRON MAN
RENDERS HIMSELF
IMMOBILIZED
BY THE ENEMY'S
ATTACKS



UGHN!

NO TIME
TO CHAT,
WORLDMIND!

WITH ALL
CONFUSION,
IRON MAN

IT'S
CRITICAL
YOU PAY ATTENTION
AT THIS TIME! I NEED
POWER! I NEED
EVERYTHING YOU'VE
GOT TO GET PAST
THESE FREAKS!

THAT WILL MEAN
STRIPPING POWER
FROM WENDICE
VALPAIN AND ALL
THE NOVA CORPS
MEMBERS.

I KNOW!
DO IT!



THAT'S
MORE
LIKE IT!

SHAK-A-DOOM



I F-FOUGHT
YOUR COUNTER-
PART M-MANY
TIMES,
MAR-VELL.

HE W-WAS
A PERSISTENT
FOE L-LESS THAN
NOBLE.

HE WAS
A FOOL, HE
LET HIMSELF
DIE WHEN HE
COULD HAVE
LIVED.

IF HE HAD
F-FAILING,
IT WAS THAT
H-HE WAS
HEADSTRONG.

SOMETIMES
A-ACTED WITHOUT
CONSIDERING THE
C-CONSEQUENCES



WHAT?

YOU
H-HAVE DONE
WHAT YOU
S-SET OUT
TO

YOU HAVE
HUNTED
DOWN AND
BROUGHT
ME TO MY
DEATH.



LITERALLY.

SHE'S
RIGHT BEHIND
YOU.

YOU LET
HER IN, MAR-VELL.
YOU LET HER GET
FAR TOO CLOSE
TO YOUR ROTTING,
UNDYING HEART.



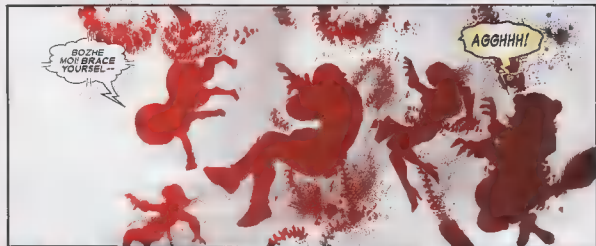
NO!
THAT'S NOT
FAIR!



FAIR? YOU
CHEATED DEATH,
MAR-VELL.

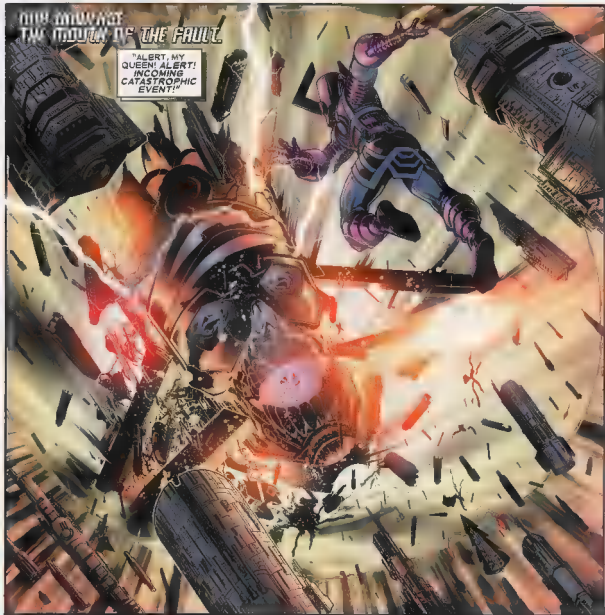
NO ONE
GETS TO
DO THAT
TWICE.





THE MOUTH OF THE FAULT

"ALERT, MY QUEEN! ALERT!
INCOMING
CATASTROPHIC
EVENT!"



EXOTIC
ENERGY
DETONATION!
POINT OF ORIGIN--
THE CANCER-
VERSE!

SENSORS
HAVE RED-LINED!
IT'S SO POWERFUL,
WE CAN'T EVEN
READ IT!

HOSTILE
FORCES ARE IN
DISARRAY! THEY'RE
EITHER BEING
DISINTEGRATED
OR SUCKED BACK
INTO THE
FAULT!

ALL FLEET
UNITS! FULL
REVERSE! DISENGAGE
AND PULL AWAY
BEFORE YOU ARE
CAUGHT IN THE
BACK-RIP!



THE SITE OF THE NECROPSY WITH
THE CANCERVERSE.

I JUST
KILLED A
UNIVERSE
FOR YOU.

EVEN
THE MALIGN
UNDYING ONES
LIE CRIPPLED
AROUND
US.

AEONS WILL
PASS BEFORE
THEY HEAL
THEMSELVES.

SAY
SOMETHING.

I KNEW
YOU HADN'T
REALLY
FORSAKEN
ME.

I CANNOT
LIE WHEN I
FOUND YOU HAD LET
ME COME BACK
UNKILLABLE,
I DESPAIRED.

I SHOULD
HAVE KNOWN
YOU HAD A
PLAN FOR
ME.

I'VE DONE
WHAT YOU
NEEDED ME TO
DO. I DID IT
FOR YOU.

NOW TAKE
ME WITH YOU,
END THIS EMPTY
EXISTENCE AND
LET ME STAY AT
YOUR SIDE
FOREVER.

ANSWER
ME.

SAY
SOMETHING!







COME
BACK! COME
BACK!

YOU
WILL NOT
DISCARD ME
AGAIN!



QUILL!
YOU DID THIS
TO ME!

I'LL KILL
YOU! I'LL
KILL YOU
ALL!

I'LL KILL
YOUR WHOLE
UNIVERSE, AND I
WILL NOT STOP
UNTIL EVERY
LAST SOUL IS
EXTINCT!

WOW
REALLY
CAN'T LET
HIM LEAVE
HERE

I SAID
YOU SAID TO
ME ONCE,
YOU SAID...



"IF DEATH
EVER COMES
YOUR WAY AND
WON'T LET
YOU PASS...

"MAKE
SURE YOU
SCREAM RIGHT
BACK IN HIS
FACE."

I SAID
THAT?

YOU
DID.

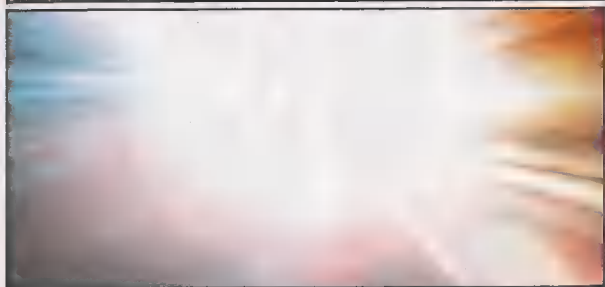


RICH,
YOU REALLY
SHOULDN'T TRUST
ANYTHING
I SAY.

MOST OF
THE TIME, I
JUST MAKE
STUFF UP.

I KNOW.

LET'S
SCREAM
IN HIS FACE
ANYWAY.



THE CITY OF ATILAN,
ON THE KREE
HOMEWORLD HALA.

THREE DAYS
LATER.

WE HAVE
LOST MANY
THINGS THAT ARE
PRECIOUS
TO US.

BUT
WE HAVE
PREVAILED.

THE FAULT
HAS COLLAPSED
AND SEALED
FOREVER. THE THREAT
OF THE MONSTROUS
CANCERVERSE HAS
BEEN LIFTED
FROM US.

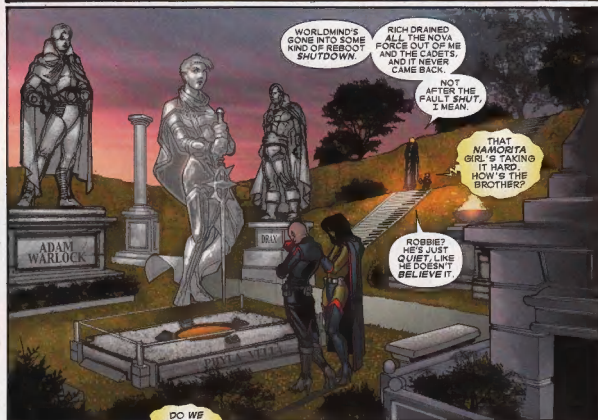
THE
CANCERVERSE
ITSELF HAS, AS
FAR AS WE CAN
TELL, BEEN
ANNIHILATED.

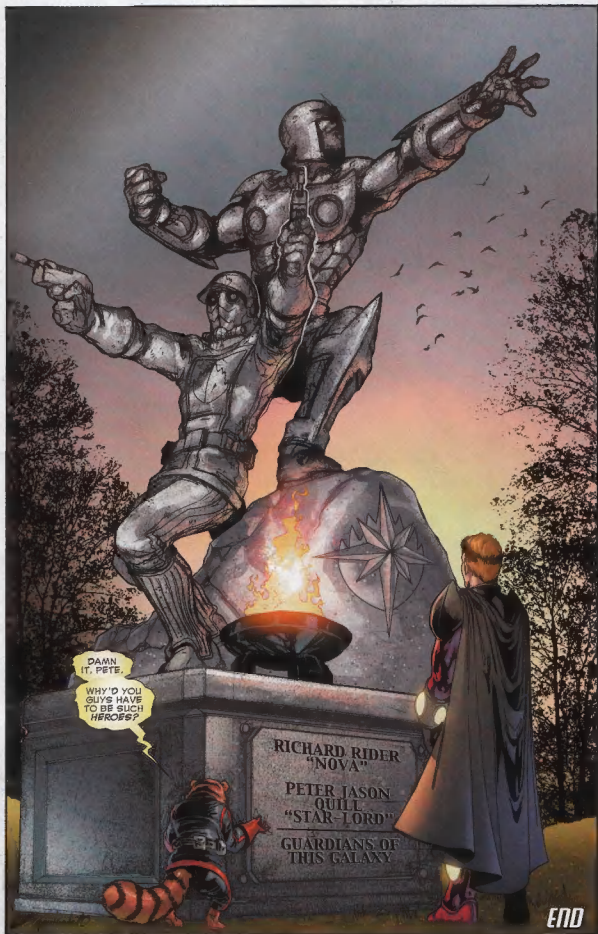


ALL THAT
REMAINS FOR
US TO DO IS
REBUILD OUR
SHATTERED
DOMAINS.

I SAY
"ALL" LIKE
IT WILL BE
SIMPLE.

TODAY, WE
SIMPLY GATHER
TO REMEMBER AND
HONOR THOSE WHO
HAVE FALLEN IN
THE COURSE OF
THIS NIGHTMARISH
STRUGGLE.





END

NEXT: THE **THANOS** IMPERATIVE



DEVASTATION

THE THREAT OF LORD MAR-VELL AND THE CANCERVERSE HAS BEEN DEFEATED...BUT WHO IS LEFT TO PICK UP THE PIECES? WHO WILL HOLD THE SHATTERED CIVILIZATIONS OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE TOGETHER IN THIS BLEAK NEW AGE...AND IS ANYONE LEFT TO GUARD THE GALAXY? FIND OUT NEXT MONTH AS DAN ABNETT, ANDY LANNING AND MIGUEL SEPULVEDA PRESENT THE STUNNING EPILOGUE TO OUR LATEST AND GREATEST COSMIC SAGA!